SECURITY CHALLENGES AND NATION BUILDING IN NIGERIA

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Abstract: Africa's recent security issues have become a cog in the continent's nation-building machinery. Perhaps the biggest threats to security in Africa are violent extremism and terrorism; there are local groups operating throughout east, west, and southern Africa that have connections to international terrorism. Their actions incite regional conflicts and facilitate organized crime networks, further destabilizing an already precarious political environment that ought to be a tool for nation-building and the advancement of development across Africa, particularly in Nigeria. Security issues have included kidnapping, killings, and the destruction of government buildings, medical facilities, and schools. These issues have plunged the country into a persistent state of insecurity and impeded the process of nation-building. Therefore, this paper uses Nigeria as a case study to examine the threat of security challenges to the development of nation building in Africa. Qualitative techniques are used to gather secondary data for analysis. The results showed that a great deal of lives and property have been lost to insecurity, which has also hindered the effective execution of government policies and initiatives aimed at strengthening the country. As a result, this paper concludes that security challenges have a negative impact on nation building and makes recommendations for how to lessen security challenges in order to promote Nigerian nation building through good governance, corruption, synergy-security, transparent, and accountable leadership.
Keywords: Security, nation building, challenges, development

Introduction

For Africa to develop and succeed in nation-building, peace, safety, and security are essential and necessary conditions. Africa has recently seen unheard-of levels of instability and crisis, which have resulted in fatalities and property damage. The rate of violent crimes in the nation, including politically motivated killings, kidnappings, armed robberies, banditry, suicide bombings, religious killings, ethnic conflicts, and the "unknown gunman syndrome," is rising and has impeded the development of national building in Africa (Adegoke, 2010). The alarming security challenges which cut across the nooks and crannies of the country call for worry. The aforementioned situation has made national security threat to be a major issue for the government which has led to large allocation for national budget to security.

According to Mbachu (2019), in an attempt to characterize the nature of internal insecurity in Nigeria, there is a rise in incidents, militancy, insurgency, human trafficking, ritual killing, and corruption in both high and low places. He added that the nation's internal security agencies are obviously overwhelmed by the complexity of the current state of

insecurity and concluded that investigating the underlying causes of Nigeria's security problems and reconstruction efforts is the way out. Onifade, Imhompi, and Urim (2013) link a population of resentful individuals who feel left out and have little to no access to the nation's shared past with the rise in political rivalry, intolerance of religion, and ethnic hatred. It is important to remember that Nigeria's multiethnic and multi-religious makeup presents security risks in the context of the nation's political system. Youth unemployment, corruption, a lack of effective governance, and the nation's lack of development have all been markers of the security challenge and nation-building (Oshio, 2009). Nigeria has a lot of natural and human resources, but the country is still developing, and the benefits are not evenly distributed. A persistent state of insecurity has been imposed on the continent, impeding the development of nation-building in Africa. Other security challenges include abduction and the destruction of government properties such as schools, health centres, and administrative buildings. Thus, the threat of security issues to the advancement of nation-building in Africa, and Nigeria specifically, was examined in this paper.

Review of Related Literature
Security
The reason for the emergence of the leviathan (the sovereign, state or Government) according to Thomas Hobbes in his "social contract theory" is to maintain social order, as well as to ensure security of lives and property within the state. For this reason, the concept of security has been the priority of every modern society. The concept has attracted challenges in giving simple definition that will give all-inclusive understanding about its nature. Onyeyemi and Atao (2020:48) Opines that because of the pertinence of ensuring that, there is internal security to people which is the sole responsibility of government, it has been defined in so many ways by many scholars, security experts, security managers, government officials and security analysis depending in their perceptions. Naakiel and Ayokhai (2006:3) contend that comprehensive security is fundamental to attaining the essential peace and security that a country seeks. This implies that security must encompass all spheres of human strive that have the capacity to improve internal security within society. It also suggests that all indicators that offer total peace and security must be addressed by the government in order to avoid insecurity in society. According to Mbachu (2019), security is a condition in which there are fewer or included threats as well as tensions and no immediate dangers to the state's stability from non-state actors, other states, or internal and external threats. In this context, stability refers to the regularity, order, and pattern that defined the state's condition over a long period of time. According to the aforementioned perspectives on the notion, security encompasses more than just protecting people's lives and property; it also entails making sure that the government strictly upholds and protects people's security in all that they do. Broadly speaking, security refers to the overall state of harmony, stability, and order in a community. In particular, security has aims and a personal interpretation. According to Lipmann (1968), Wolfers (1979), and Imobighe (2013), safety precautions ensure lack of dangers to life, liberty, and property in the objective dimension. Subjectively speaking, security is the lack of fear of losing one's life, liberty, or possessions in relation to the state's ability to prevent danger or win the right to defend the health and safety of the populace (Aja, 2009:34–35). There are military and development aspects to security as well.

In relation to the military, it assesses the state's ability to use law enforcement to safeguard the nation and manage sporadic criminality within the system (Aja, 2019). From a development standpoint, there can be no "real" security unless people are gradually given more influence in politics, culture, the economy, education, and technology. Namana (1968) made the observation that security is development, and that security cannot exist without development. All things considered, security ensures that people, communities, organisations, geopolitical entities, and their means of subsistence are well-protected and preserved for the benefit of the general public (Mbachu and Umar, 2013:324; Nwolise, 2017:13:15). From the above conceptualizations, it can be understood that security is the live wire of any society. It is a mandatory task of any government that intends to continue to enjoy the support and legitimacy of the people. Paradoxically, security does not connote the absence of conflict; but rather the existence of an accepted mechanism for conflict resolution.

National security

National security is the need to maintain the state's existence by using diplomatic, political, economic, and power-projection strategies. The stability and tranquilly of a society are fundamental components of national security. According to Professor Al-Mashal, national security concerns should include a society's and its members' physical, social, and psychological well-being both within the country and in relation to broader regional and global systems. The full execution of the multiple social-economic and political liberties found in the 1999 amended Nigerian constitution would greatly aid the attainment of national security alongside nation-building (Oshio, 2009). The following actions are taken to protect national security: Rallying allies and isolating threats through diplomacy; Using economic might to force cooperation; Preserving a strong military; Protecting the country from internal threats by deploying secret police or counterintelligence services (Wikipedia 2013).

Nation-Building

In Western political science literature, nation-building is defined as the process by which people shift their allegiance and commitment from smaller tribes, villages, or petty principalities to the larger central political system. This has been criticized by at least one non-Western political scientist. Moving "commitments and loyalties from local or limited levels of ethnic groups to a more expansive political unit" is not what Elaigwu (1983) defines as nation-building. For example, he says that whether someone is Ibo, Yoruba, Hausa, or Tiv depends on who they are. It is not transferable. Declaring oneself to be an Ibo or Hausa does not mean anything. Elaigwu goes on to say that nation-building is a two-pronged endeavour. Nation-building is defined by the vertical dimension as the process by which the people gradually come to recognize the legitimacy and necessity of a national government and to identify (as a result of the growing number of local loyalty) with the federal government as a national symbol. As per the lateral dimension, nation-building entails acknowledging other citizens as legitimate fellow citizens of a "corporate" nation and accepting their rights to a portion of the same history, resources, values, and other characteristics of the State - all supported by a feeling of unity within the political community.

Elaigwu is correct when she emphasizes that an individual cannot transfer their identity, even with words to that effect. However, this author firmly believes that Elaigwu's "vertical dimension" of the nation-building problem can effectively replace state-building, while the "symmetrical dimension" can be applied to nation-building with little negative impact. In light of this, we describe nation-building as a means of fostering harmony and a feeling of inclusion among diverse groups within a state, entailing efforts to integrate the groups in order to construct a "nation" within the State.

Elements that Promote Nation-Building
The following conditions may very well be met in order to improve the nation-building process:
The people share common values, beliefs, and attitudes; ii. There is an efficient ruling class that can fend off hostile, detrimental factors and internal civil unrest while defending the country against outside powers.
People and organizations accepting decisions that they disagree with, putting up with opposing viewpoints, respecting the power of political institutions, being willing to make concessions, and finally coming to an agreement on standard operating procedures and courses of action. To put it another way, for a people to coexist as a nation, they must be willing to recognize the legitimacy of political associations, be open to making concessions, and finally decide on shared policies and practices. In other words, there must be a will among the people to live together as a nation;
Economic prosperity, which permits people to live satisfying lives and maintain good health;
Centripetal nationalism. Nationalism is a volatile force that can offer a particularly strong foundation for loyalty or disintegration. When the power is effectively directed towards state institutions, a singular political community of great importance is established.

Conditions that Impede the Building of Nations
Building a nation is almost unattainable if one or more of the previously listed components are absent. Additionally, the following impede the process:
Centrifugal nationalism: This happens when and if each ethnic group or nationality in a state applies the national self-government principle. Then, the authority of the federal government would be so diminished that it might be doubted whether the state even exists. This could be categorized as an internal factor of art.
An additional factor that hinders nation-building is external influence, especially in the designated third world. There are two possible ways in which this could appear: (a) external forces intervening to alter the conditions in which nation-building needs to take place; or (b) groups inside countries identifying with groups outside of them as a result of revolutionary trends in communication that have made the world smaller. An excellent illustration of this is the inclination of Nigeria's Islamic community to look to the Islamic world in general and the Islamic Middle East in particular; this is demonstrated by the attempt to have Nigeria admitted as an Organization of Islamic Conference member. (OIC). Internal divisions are exacerbated as a result.

Nigeria's National Security and Nation-Building Challenges

We have achieved some notable achievements in our pursuit of nation-building and strong national security, such as maintaining national unity in the face of numerous obstacles. However, these obstacles still prevent us from realizing our greatest potential. Nigeria faces many obstacles in the areas of national security and nation-building, but the following are some of the main ones that are emphasized and covered:

The challenge from our history

Security challenge

The challenge of building institutions for democracy and development

Ethno-religious conflicts

Loss of socio-cultural and communal value

Porous border

Unemployment/ poverty

1. The Challenge of History

Nigeria's historical development has presented certain difficulties for the country's national security and development. The country was split into the North and South by colonial rule, with distinct land tenure, local government, educational, security, and legal systems. Nigerian nationalists from various regions engaged in just as much internal conflict as they did with British colonialists during the decolonization struggle. Because of this historical legacy, regionalism has posed a significant obstacle to nation-building and has an effect on national security in the nation. This division has been a source of domestic tension and undermined our efforts at creating a common nationhood (Gambari, 2009]

2.   Security Challenge

Rising levels of insecurity are the norm in Nigeria; there are daily reports of kidnappings, banditry, robberies, murders, and wanton killings. Even more concerning is the fact that despite massive investments in the defence industry, the Nigerian government appears incapable of containing this threat, which has long threatened the country's security and impeded the process of nation-building. The Office of the National Security Adviser (ONSA), Major General Babagana Monguno (RTD), released the national security strategy in 2019. In it, it was made abundantly clear that security is essential to growth and advancement in a free society and that it ensures the stability of the state and the well-being of all its citizens. It also mentioned how Nigeria is currently dealing with more complicated security issues than it did in the past. Consequently, this necessitates the development of a strong, adaptable, and proactive national security infrastructure and framework that can respond quickly to these expanding threats (Tribune, January 21, 2022). Considered as the giant of Africa, Nigeria has been experiencing unprecedented levels of insecurity due to the actions of Fulani herdsmen; Boko Haram; armed robberies, kidnappings, banditry; political, religious, and communal crises; murder; Niger Delta militants destroying oil facilities; kidnapping and trafficking of children; secessionist movements, etc. Nigeria is in an unquantifiable state of difficulty due to its national security issues. Despite having abundant natural and human resources, the people of this country are severely hungry, which is detrimental to them.

3. The challenge of Building Institutions for Democracy and Development

One of the biggest obstacles to national security alongside nation building is the establishment of institutions. The effectiveness of the important national institutions determines whether a country can maintain economic growth without producing extreme

inequality or handle its political and social conflicts amicably without spiralling into war. In order to accomplish the national goals of democratic rule and long-term prosperity, Nigeria must establish and fortify the following institutions:

Organizations dedicated to promoting public integrity: Courts, the ICPC, and the EFCC are examples of organizations established to uphold standards and prevent the misuse of public office for personal benefit.

Public service delivery institutions: The primary body in charge of providing public services is the civil service. The civil service must fulfill its historical obligations to promote sound public policy, assist and oversee the private sector, and provide managerial guidance for the operation of public service enterprises. Politics must be kept out of the civil service's hands and it must remain impartial.

The judiciary: In any democratic environment, the court system is a crucial institution. The judiciary mediates conflicts between the government and its branches, as well as between citizens and representatives of the private sector. Due to the Supreme Court's high calibre of decision-making in recent years particularly in certain politically contentious cases the public has come to greatly trust and respect the court.

4. Ethno -Religious Conflicts

Conflicts between ethnic groups have always resulted from the emergence of novel and narrow-minded kinds of political perception and identity. Large-scale killings and acts of aggression among groups in Nigeria have frequently resulted from claims and presumptions over scarce resources, authority, land, chieftainship titles, and government authority in local areas, authority over markets, and other unimportant issues. These stem from mistrust between the nation's main religious institutions and different ethnic groups.

5. Loss of Socio-cultural and Communal Value System

According to Idris (2019), charming characteristics of African societies include collectivism, devotion to authority as well as community, honesty, truthfulness, dedication, acceptance, love for others, coexistence and mutual harmony, disgust of theft, a reverence for human life, and individual identification with one another. However, these values that kept society safe and secure have gradually been abandoned and replaced by the purely Western concept of "contemporary society and human civilization", which has put nation-building at risk due to its transplantation without adaptation.

6. Porous Borders

According to Idris (2019), a security expert, one significant factor that has increased Nigeria's security challenge where movements are largely untracked is the porous nature of our borders. Because of this and the inadequate security system, weapons from other nations are easily imported into Nigeria. Access to small arms and ammunition has made weapons easier for criminal gangs and militant organizations. Over 70% of the approximately 8 million illicit firearms in West Africa are thought to be in Nigeria (Auoh, 2018). The porosity of Nigeria borders has also made it possible for unwarranted influx of migrants from neighboring countries such as the Republic of Niger, Chad and Benin. These migrants, who are mostly young are more of the perpetrators of crimes and insurgency in the country.

7. Unemployment/Poverty

In Nigeria, unemployment and poverty have been found to be the main causes of insecurity. According to Aigbakhon (2008), poverty is characterized by a prolonged lack of well-being, which is deemed insufficient for a respectable standard of living. Unemployment

and poverty are similar to each other. They help one another out. Unemployment remains one of the nation's most persistent social issues in Nigeria. Nigerians, particularly the youth, are negatively drawn to crime due to the country's high rates of unemployment and poverty. Major contributors to the nation's insecurity are the government's persistent inability to address issues like unemployment, poverty, and an imbalance of wealth among nationalities.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this research study, which focuses on security challenges and nation building in Africa with a particular focus on Nigeria, is systems theory. This is in line with the modern emphasis on a scientific approach to the study of social sciences. Because systems theory presents and operates organizations as unified, purposeful systems made up of interconnected parts, it can be viewed as an integrative theory. When distinct organizational units collaborate and interact, they become more productive than if they had operated independently. This is emphasized by the management concept of synergy, which states that the whole is greater than its parts (Obikezie and Obi, 2004). The general systems theory is an embodiment of systemic approaches and it had its origin in the natural science, biology, social engineering and cybernet (Akpotor, 2011). Bertanaffy, a biologist, developed the application of general systems theory in 1920 (Obagbinoko and Egbaju, 2011). They went on to say that in his 1953 work "The Political System," political scientist David Easton was the first to develop and apply systems theory to the analysis of politics. He employed the theory of systems as a method to examine the information gathered in order to produce dependable and comprehensive understanding of social phenomena. Three components help to clarify the concept of systems theory. A system is made up of interrelated parts:

i. Parts

ii. The parts must be related to the whole

iii. Each part makes certain contributions towards the survival of the whole.

For this reason, the system that Henry cited in Ezeai and Esiagu (2009) is seen as a unit in which all things are related to one another and function to achieve the goal of the whole. David Eastons stated unequivocally that a society's political system is the set of relationships that allow for the adoption and execution of authoritative decisions. According to his theory, the way a political system works is that it takes inputs from its surroundings, or the people, converts those inputs within the system, and then produces outputs, or decisions that have authority. Events that elicit reactions, demands, and supports such as approval or disapproval, which are decisions made by authority could be considered these inputs. Events that elicit reactions, demands, and support such as either acceptance or rejection of a decision could be considered these inputs, and government actions, programs, decisions, and parliamentary acts could be considered the outputs. These authoritative outputs typically have an impact on the environment, which in turn triggers feedback loops that alter the volume and intensity of environmental demands and supports. According to the principles of systems theory, nation-building requires stability, tranquilly, and security as prerequisites. Therefore, meeting these needs necessitates an all-encompassing approach with a collaborative effect, which is the cornerstone of systems theory. In actuality, component units must cooperate to lower national insecurity due to the critical importance of national security to state survival and nation-building. The entire

government must offer the required resources in order for the nation's security forces to operate effectively.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The challenges Nigeria faces in maintaining national security and developing its nation have been made clear by this paper. According to the paper, security is essential on all fronts national, regional, and international. The research study has also demonstrated that the government bears the exclusive responsibility for ensuring the security of its people; in fact, any government's legitimacy is derived from this responsibility. The paper argued that because of our history of colonization, an atmosphere of needless and unhealthy rivalry has been created, especially among ethnic groups, while the nation still faces severe socioeconomic issues. In more recent times, religion has grown to be a contentious topic that divides people. The relationship between Muslims and Christians is marked by intense mistrust, anxiety, and fears, which has resulted in violence in the North. The numerous ethno-religious conflicts have resulted in property destruction, businesses closing and investors running away, as well as the deaths, injuries, and displacement of people. Communities have also been divided along ethno-religious lines, which have hampered Nigeria's efforts to develop its nation. The report further suggests that in order to prevent porous borders, there is an urgent need for good democratic processes, people-centered governance, transparent and accountable leadership, effective and efficient law enforcement institutions, and partnerships with neighbouring nations. Above all, the government needs a social contract with its citizens as a basis for demanding their loyalty and support.

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